

Meeting Minutes
Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee
September 28, 2006
Memorial Library Meeting Room

Attending: Peter Berry, Tory Beyer, Jon Benson, Catherine Coleman, Walter Foster, Matt Lundberg, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Ed Starzec, Nancy Tavernier

Vice Chair Ken Sghia-Hughes opened the meeting at 8:05PM.

1. Overview of the CPC Application Process

After introductions, Ken Sghia-Hughes delivered a presentation entitled “The Lifecycle of a Community Preservation Application”. The presentation summarized key steps in the application process, emphasizing up-front coordination with the CPC and relevant town committees and organizations. Key dates for the 2006 application process include the following:

- November 13, 2006: Deadline to submit complete applications
- TBD (November, 2006 to January, 2006): Applicant presentations
- January 25, 2007: CPC “brainstorms” pros and cons of each application
- February 8, 2007: CPC makes preliminary recommendations
- February 22, 2007: CPC makes final recommendations
- TBD (late February, 2007): Town Warrant finalized
- TBD (April, 2007): Town Meeting

2. RFPs and Public Bidding Procedures

Dean Charter provided the attendees with an overview of the state’s public procurement regulations. Four major statutes govern public procurement by cities and towns in Massachusetts:

- MGL Chapter 30B: Procurement of supplies and services
- MGL Chapter 7: Procurement of design services for vertical construction (i.e., buildings)
- MGL Chapter 149: Procurement of construction for vertical construction
- MGL Chapter 30,39M: Procurement for horizontal construction (i.e., roads, pipelines)

Dean covered exemptions to Chapter 30B, the definitions of invitations to bid and requests for proposals, and specific prohibitions. A brief question and answer session followed the presentation.

3. CPC Application “Case Studies”

Several successful applicants from the 2006 round were invited in to share their insight with potential applicants for 2007.

- **Fitzgerald Piano**

Mary Ann Ashton summarized her experience with the Fitzgerald Piano application from last year. She cited numerous obstacles, including the project's lack of a natural constituency and the lack of support for historic projects in Acton. She highlighted the importance of networking (in her case, with the CPC, the Acton Historical Society, the Board of Selectmen, and the Library Trustees). The project is moving forward and will go out to bid soon, with the expectation being that restoration will take three or four months. Plans are in the works for a fundraiser to supplement CPC funding and endow a maintenance fund.

- **Habitat for Humanity**

Bill Schumacher, Co-Chair for the Acton Local Project Committee gave a brief overview of Habitat for Humanity's experience with the CPC process. The group submitted a proposal in 2004 that was subsequently withdrawn but resubmitted successfully in 2005. Bill stressed the importance of consistency with the Community Preservation Plan and the ability to demonstrate leverage.

- **Gates Playground**

Chris Fenniman appeared on behalf of the Gates Playground project. Chris explained that the playground was in poor condition and resulting in frequent splinter related injuries for school children. Fundraising and donated labor allowed the group to ask the CPC for a reduced amount. The project is underway but some unexpected site issues have slowed things down. A brief question and answer session focused on the distinction between new versus replacement recreation facilities.

4. New Projects

Ken asked the audience if any of the groups present were planning to submit an application this year. Several members of the audience as well as CPC members provided brief summaries of anticipated applications.

- **High School Athletic Field Lighting**

Michael Coppolino described a proposal to light the A-B Regional High School varsity baseball field, adjacent tennis courts, and practice field. Lighting would allow for additional evening use of these existing facilities by a variety of groups. The group has already secured a favorable legal opinion from Town Counsel. The cost of the project is expected to be approximately \$250,000, with about one-third of the amount privately raised. The possibility of a contribution from the school system was not clear.

- **Housing Authority**

Kelley Cronin from the Acton Housing Authority indicated that the group will likely be looking for money to help provide support services, but could offer no more details.

- **Town Hall Clock Tower Documentation**

As a potential historic preservation project, Nancy Tavernier suggested documenting the years of initials carved into the walls of the Town Hall clock tower by repairmen and town staff. Tory Beyer said that she was aware of eleven potential historic projects not including this one.

- **Renovation of Woodbury Lane Home**

Roland mentioned that the Town was looking into the possibility of restoring the town-owned home on Woodbury Lane behind Town Hall.

- **Restoration of Town Boundary Stone Markers**

Roland noted that the paint has faded on the town's historic boundary markers and a group is considering an application to fund their restoration.

- **Morrison Farm**

Walter Foster mentioned that the Morrison Farm planning process is coming to an end in the near future and that it will likely spin off several CPC applications, potentially including the restoration of a historic stone bridge abutment, creation of walking trails, restoration of the ice house foundation, funding for a community organic farm, and restoration of the East Acton village green.

- **Bruce Freeman Rail Trail**

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail group is expected to file an application for additional funding.

- **Open Space**

Walter noted that a major open space purchase is in the works.

- **Theater Three**

Matt added that Theater Three is considering an application.

5. Minutes of 9/14/06

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved unanimously without any edits.

6. New Business

Peter noted that it looks like we may have more applications than funding for this year and asked if unexpended funds from closed out past projects have been added to the pool of available funds for this year. Roland replied that this will be done prior to Town Meeting.

Ken asked what the status was of hiring a project manager/administrator to oversee the town projects. Walter replied that he has raised the issue with the Board of Selectmen but that they are unlikely to do so due to other staffing issues. Other

approaches were briefly discussed, such as requiring town projects to include a management fee in their request and/or jointly hiring a “circuit rider” with other towns.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50PM.